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LETTER DATED 29 APRIL 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to inform you of the following:

At 1100 hours on 9 April 1998, the Iraqi barge No. 1, having delivered fresh water to Mina al-Bakr, was returning to the port of Umm Qasr when it was subjected to an inspection by an armed American vessel carrying 25 officers of the United States Coast Guard. The barge was ordered to halt under threat of armed force and the officers boarded the vessel. The crew were all herded together towards the bow of the vessel and all of its navigation records and logs were minutely examined. The officers inspected the barge's equipment and broke open the locks to the food and water stores. The inspection continued until 1415 hours on the same day, when the officers left the barge and gave it permission to resume its journey to the port of Umm Qasr.

I request that you intervene with the Government of the United States of America with a view to bringing a halt to these actions, which have become much more frequent of late and which, as flagrant violations of the Charter of the United Nations and the provisions of international law, pose a threat to the sovereignty and security of the Republic of Iraq.

The Republic of Iraq affirms its right to seek legal compensation for the damage inflicted on the Iraqi State and its citizens by these deplorable actions.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nizar HAMDOON
Permanent Representative

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